

Tobe Hooper:

An Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Creator: | Hooper, Tobe, 1943-2017 |
| Title: | Tobe Hooper Papers |
| Dates: | 1941–1983 (bulk 1967–1975) |
| Extent: | 9 document boxes (3.78 linear feet), 6 oversize boxes (osb) |
| Abstract: | The Tobe Hooper Papers document the creation of director, writer, and producer Tobe Hooper's first feature-length films, <i>Eggshells</i> and the <i>Texas Chainsaw Massacre</i> . The Papers include production notes, publicity documents, photographs, negatives, slides, clippings, serials, and props along with other professional and personal materials. |
| Call Number: | Film Collection FI-014 |
| Language: | English and French |
| Access: | Open for research |

Administrative Information

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Acquisition: | Gift, 1995 |
| Processed by: | Katherine Kapsidelis, 2015 |
| Repository: | The University of Texas at Austin, Harry Ransom Center |

Biographical Sketch

Director, writer, and producer Tobe Hooper was born in Austin, Texas, on January 25, 1943. Hooper's parents were hotel managers who also owned a movie theatre in San Angelo, Texas, and Hooper became a fan of the cinema at a young age. He studied film at the University of Texas at Austin, and his early films included the short *Heisters* (circa 1963-1965) and documentaries on education (*A Way of Learning*, circa 1967), the demolition of a neighborhood home in Austin (*Down Friday Street*, circa 1970), and the folk group Peter, Paul, and Mary (circa 1970).

His first feature-length film was *Eggshells: An American Freak Illumination* (1970), an independent production that Hooper wrote and directed. Filmed in Austin, *Eggshells* was a mix of fantasy and reality aimed at the "bohemian segments of our society." The film won a gold award at the 1971 Atlanta International Film Festival.

Kim Henkel, a co-star in *Eggshells* under the pseudonym Boris Schnurr, would go on to collaborate with Hooper on his next film. Hooper and Henkel co-wrote a script loosely inspired by the story of the Wisconsin grave robber and murderer Ed Gein. Filmed with the working title "Leatherface," the movie would ultimately be called *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Hooper directed the low-budget production, which was filmed on a compressed schedule outside of Austin in 1973. It was distributed by Bryanston Pictures, and although commercially successful, the film's release was marred by financial disputes. Initially receiving mixed critical reviews, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was screened at the 1975 Director's Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival and has become an influential classic of the horror genre.

Hooper's long career in film and television since the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* includes the critically acclaimed film *Poltergeist* (1982), the television adaptation of *Salem's Lot* (1979), and the sequel *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2* (1986).

Hooper died on August 26, 2017.

Sources:

Macor, Alison. *Chainsaws, Slackers, and Spy Kids*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Muir, John Kenneth. *Eaten Alive at a Chainsaw Massacre: The Films of Tobe Hooper*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2002.

Scope and Contents

The Tobe Hooper Papers (1941–1983, bulk 1967–1975) document the creation of Hooper's first feature-length films, *Eggshells* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. The Hooper Papers include production notes, publicity materials, photographs, negatives, slides, clippings, serials, and props related to the creation of these films. The collection also contains other personal and professional documents, including correspondence, materials from the 1975 Cannes Film Festival, and foreign film posters. The timespan documented in this collection is limited and does not encompass the entirety of Hooper's lifelong career in the film and television industry. The Papers are divided into three series: I. Films, 1970-1975, 1982, undated; II. Career and Personal, 1967–1983, undated; and III. Serials, 1941, 1966–1977.

The Hooper Papers, which were previously contained in a storage unit, arrived at the Harry Ransom Center with no discernable organization, arrangement, or (with one exception) labeled files. The collection was organized at the Ransom Center by subject, format, and importance, with items related directly to *Eggshells* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* separated from other professional and personal materials. All file titles (other than folder 2.9, where Hooper's title was retained) have been created by the Ransom Center.

Series I. Films is divided into two subseries: A. *Eggshells*, 1970-1971, undated; and B. *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, 1973-1975, 1982, undated. Subseries A. *Eggshells* contains production notes, film stills, slides, and publicity materials, along with a program and poster from the 1971 Atlanta International Film Festival. Subseries B. *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* includes production notes, publicity materials, photographs, negatives, slides, clippings, and props. Some documents in Series II. Career and Personal are also related to the production of *Eggshells* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and serials with *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* articles and advertisements are located in the Serials and Publications series.

Series II. Career and Personal is divided into four subseries: A. Professional Papers, 1967–1975, undated; B. Screenplays by Others, 1973-1975, undated; C. Cannes International Film Festival, 1975; and D. Personal, 1972-1974, undated.

Subseries A. Professional Papers contains career-related documents, including correspondence, slides, scrapbooks, and foreign film posters. The correspondence folder includes letters related to *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, which is also documented in this subseries with other materials, as is *Eggshells*.

Subseries B. Screenplays by Others contains eleven screenplays in alphabetical order by the name of the writer.

Subseries C. Cannes International Film Festival contains publications and publicity materials from the 1975 festival. Although *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was screened at the Director's Fortnight, there are no documents in this collection that relate directly to this screening.

Subseries D. Personal contains documents, negatives, and photographs along with other materials that are not directly related to Hooper's career.

Series III. Serials, 1941, 1966–1977, contains newspapers and magazines, some of which reference Hooper or *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. These materials are in alphabetical order by title then by date. Some publications are incomplete.

The archive was purchased at auction and donated to the Harry Ransom Center.

Related Material

The Ransom Center holds the papers of Warren Skaaren, the first executive director of the Texas Film Commission, who played an important role in the production of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Skaaren's papers include a screenplay for *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

Separated Material

More than 950 moving image items and associated sound recordings documenting *Eggshells* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and Hooper's Peter, Paul, and Mary documentary, education project, and other commercial and documentary work were transferred to the Center's Moving Image and Sound Recordings Collections.

A Leatherface mask from *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was transferred to the Costume Collection. Access to the mask is restricted for preservation purposes and available only with **curatorial permission**.

Savage Cinema by Rick Trader Witcombe (Bounty Books, 1975) was transferred to the Ransom Center Library. The book includes a brief commentary on *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

Index Terms

People

Hooper, Tobe, 1943 - .

Subjects

Horror films--Production and direction.

Motion Pictures, American.

Motion picture producers and directors--United States.

Places

Austin (Tex.)

Document Types

Black-and-white photographs.

Clippings.

Color prints (photographs).

Correspondence.

Film negatives.

Film stills.

Moving images.

Newspapers.

Posters.

Screenplays.

Scrapbooks.

Serials (publications).

Slides.

Sound recordings.

Series I. Films, 1970-1975, 1982, undated

Subseries A. Eggshells, 1970-1971, undated

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Production notes, circa 1970 | Container 1.1 |
| Film stills, undated | Container 1.2 |
| Slides, 1970 | Container Cold Storage |
| Atlanta International Film Festival materials, film pressbooks and small poster, 1971 | Container 1.3 |
| Poster, circa 1970 | Container osb 1.1 |

Subseries B. The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, 1973-1975, 1982 undated

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Production materials, 1973-1975, undated | Container 1.4-7, 2.1 |
| Slaughterhouse photographs, 1973, undated | Container 2.2 |
| Photograph negatives, film production and location research, 1973, undated | Container Cold Storage |
| Slides, film production, 1973 | |
| Set illustration and Bryanston Pictures Pressbook, 1974, undated | Container osb 1.2 |
| Publicity materials and clippings, 1973-1975, undated | Container 2.3-5 |
| Ritz Theater Poster, 1982 | Container osb 1.3 |
| Publicity flyer of Marilyn Burns, undated | Container 2.6 |
| Photographs of Dottie Pearl [make-up artist for TCM], undated | Container 2.7 |
| Season's Greetings cards, undated | Container 2.8 |
| Small bones, undated | Container 4 |

Series II. Career and Personal, 1967–1983, undated

Subseries A. Professional Papers, 1967–1975, undated

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Parallel Productions Education Project, 1967 | Container 2.9 |
| Footage notes, undated | Container 2.10 |
| Publicity photographs and film stills, 1973, undated | Container 2.11 |
| Mona Lee Fultz, note to Tobe Hooper, resume, headshots, circa 1975 | Container 3.1 |
| Correspondence, financial documents, and other materials, 1974-1975 | Container 3.2-4 |
| Filmex 1974 program, promotional advertisements and brochures, 1971–1974, undated | Container 3.5 |
| Deluxe general, West Coast Price List; Beaulieu manual, 1971, undated | Container 3.6 |
| Screen Actors Guild, employee paperwork and agreements, 1967, 1971, 1974, undated | Container 3.7-9 |
| Slides, 1971, undated | Container Cold Storage |
| Scrapbooks with film sequence photographs, undated | Container 4 |
| Foreign film posters, 47, 1976–1983, undated | Container osb 1.4-5 |

Subseries B. Screenplays by Others, 1973-1975, undated

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Bloom, Jeffrey. The Arisen, 1973 | Container 5.1 |
| Carson, L. M. Kit. Double Eagle, 1975 | Container 5.2 |
| Case, Allen and Bob Porter. Character and Storyline Treatment, John Hurd, undated | Container 5.3 |
| Case, John. Now I Lay Me Down to Die, undated | Container 5.4 |
| Fehr, Grant. Spooks, 1974 | Container 5.5 |
| Feigelson, J. D. Final Printout, undated | Container 5.6 |

Jackson, Donald G. and Jerry Youngkins. The Demon Lover, 1974. Includes correspondence and Finders Keepers zine, Winter 1973 **Container 5.7**

Lamb, Bernadette. Bury the Dead, undated **Container 5.8**

Ritchey, Lloyd F., Jr. Night of the Electric Death, 1973 **Container 5.9**

Teller, Ira **Container**

Death Machines, 1975 **Container 6.1**

Fear in Dark Places, 1973 **Container 6.2**

Subseries C. Cannes International Film Festival, 1975

Cinema Australia publicity materials, 1975 **Container 6.3**

Cinema Canada publicity materials, 1975 **Container 6.4**

CinemaTV Today, Cannes 75 Festival Special, 1975 **Container 6.5**

Le Film Francais, 1975 **Container 6.6**

The Hollywood Reporter, Cannes Special Issue; Paris Côte d'azur, Special Festival, 1975 **Container 6.7**

UniCinema, 1975 (2 copies) **Container 6.8-7.1**

Film programs and press kit, circa 1975 **Container 7.2**

Publicity materials, postcards, personal note, and other documents, circa 1975 **Container 7.3-4**

Subseries D. Personal, 1972-1974, undated

Photographs, undated [Negatives moved to cold storage.] **Container 7.5**

McGovern and Shriver campaign leaflets, clipping, 1972, undated **Container 7.6**

Children's drawings, undated **Container 7.7**

Programs, hotel ephemera, and other documents, 1973-1974, undated **Container 7.8**

Reefer Madness poster, undated **Container osb 1.6**

Personal effects: cigar (partial), airgun pellets, lens, rubber tripod feet, undated **Container 4**

Series III. Serials, 1941, 1966–1977

ARX Literary Monthly, August 1969

Container 7.9

Austin American Statesman, Show World section

March 1, 1970

Container osb 2

September 8, 1974

September 29, 1974

October 6, 1974

October 13, 1974

October 20, 1974

October 27, 1974

December 1, 1974

December 15, 1974

January 5, 1975

March 23, 1975

April 13, 1975

November 2, 1975

Austin Citizen

October 3, 1974

Container osb 2

October 5, 1974

October 12, 1974

October 17, 1974

Austin People Today

October 1973 (2 copies)

Container 7.9

November 1975

Austin Sun Newspaper

August 7– 20, 1975

Container osb 2

October 2–15, 1975

October 24–30, 1975

Back Stage, March 15, 1974

Boxoffice, February 10, 1975

Container 7.9

Cavalier Magazine, April, 1968

Continental Film Review, circa 1975 (vol. 22, no. 9)

Creem, November 1975

Container 7.10

Daily Texan

October 10, 1974

Container osb 3

October 11, 1974

October 14, 1974

October 16, 1974

Pearl, December monthly magazine supplement, 1974

December 9, 1974

December 10, 1974

September 4, 1975

September 5, 1975

October 23, 1975

November 3, 1975

November 6, 1975

East Village Other

November 15-December 1, 1966 (vol. 1, no. 24)

Container 7.10

April 15-May 1, 1967 (vol. 2, no. 10)

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Entertainment Today, November 1, 1974 | Container osb 3 |
| Esquire, March 1970 | Container 8.1 |
| Excalibur (York University Community Paper) | |
| March 13, 1975 | Container osb 3 |
| March 20, 1975 | |
| Filmmakers Newsletter, | |
| January 1972 (vol.5, no. 3) | Container 8.1 |
| August 1975 (vol. 8, no. 10) (2 copies) | Container 2.3 |
| Films in Review, February 1973 | Container 8.1 |
| Free & Easy (Central Texas) | |
| September 15–October 15, 1974 | Container osb 3 |
| November 15–December 15, 1974 | |
| Houston Post Spotlight section, October 13, 1974 | |
| Japan Times | |
| March 2, 1975 | Container osb 3 |
| March 5, 1975 | |
| Life, May 19, 1941 | Container 8.2 |
| LPO (Libertarian Party of Oklahoma) News, State Fair Special Edition, 1976 | Container osb 3 |
| New York, September 8, 1975 | Container 8.2 |
| New York Post, November 1, 1974 | Container osb 3 |
| New Yorker | |
| August 4, 1975 | Container 8.3 |
| September 22, 1975 | |
| September 29, 1975 | |

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| October 6, 1975 | |
| October 13, 1975 | Container 8.4 |
| October 20, 1975 | |
| October 27, 1975 | |
| Rag (Austin, TX), June 15-22, 1970 (vol. 4, no. 29) | Container 8.5 |
| Sight and Sound | |
| Autumn 1975 | Container 8.5 |
| Spring 1977 | |
| Texas Monthly, March 1974 | |
| Time, March 3, 1975 | |
| Variety (New York edition) | |
| May 8, 1974, 17th International Film Festival Annual | Container osb 4 |
| May 15, 1974 | |
| June 5, 1974 | |
| September 4, 1974 | |
| October 9, 1974 | |
| October 16, 1974 | |
| October 30, 1974 | |
| November 6, 1974 | |
| November 13, 1974 | Container osb 5 |
| November 20, 1974 | |
| November 27, 1974 | |
| December 4, 1974 | |
| December 11, 1974 | |

December 18, 1974

February 12, 1975

August 13, 1975

September 24, 1975

October 1, 1975

October 8, 1975

October 15, 1975

November 19, 1975

November 26, 1975

Variety (Hollywood edition)

May 17, 1974

Container osb 6

May 21, 1974

May 22, 1974

June 5, 1974

November 5, 1974 (Marilyn Burns' subscription)

Variety, Anniversary Edition

69th Anniversary, 1974

Container osb 6

70th Anniversary, 1975

Village Voice

October 13, 1974

Container osb 6

September 22, 1975

Whole Earth Catalog, Fall 1969

Container 8.6